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Testbed analyzes system response to security attacks

by Fran Crumb, Information Directorate

ROME, N.Y. — The Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate recently awarded a $1,803,800 contract to BBN Corp. of Cambridge, Mass., for research to enhance the security and survivability of information networks.

The 27-month agreement, "Agent-Based Configurable Testbed," is funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency of Arlington, Va., as part of the organization's Information Assurance and Survivability program.

"BBN will develop a testbed that employs software agent and component-based technologies to model, simulate and analyze the interaction and response of various software configurations for different types of information security attacks, threats and conditions," said Carla Burns, program manager in the directorate's Information Technology Division. "The resulting technology will have applications for both military and civilian computer and communications networks."

Software agents have their own internal problem-solving abilities, which allow them to continuously collect specific information and determine when new information must be obtained to remain current in support of decision-makers. Agent technology has the potential to assist users with the informational changes and uncertainty associated with strategy and tactics for defensive information warfare. @